

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a communications network and terminals connected thereto, said method, comprising:

a) establishing a data flow between a customer terminal and another data terminal, ~~the data flow conforming to via a first router operating in accordance with~~ a best-effort packet-routing protocol; and

b) subsequently initiating from the customer terminal the use of a switched virtual circuit through ~~the network~~the first router operating in accordance with a switched virtual circuit protocol for the data flow;

wherein only when and if the user ~~subsequently~~elects to initiate the use of a switched virtual circuit does the ~~network~~first router, change ~~the routing method for data flowing to or from the customer terminal~~its operating protocol.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 including a step, prior to step (b), of communicating to the customer terminal data indicating the availability of a switched virtual circuit in the network for said data flow.

3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, in which said data indicating the availability of a switched circuit comprises a URL having a formal specific to resources located on a circuit-connected network.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, in which the packet-routing protocol is Internet Protocol.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, in which the switched virtual circuit is established in an ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) network.

6-8. Cancelled.

9. (New) A communications network having terminals connected thereto, said network comprising:

a first router operable to route data packets in a data flow between a customer terminal and another data terminal in accordance with a best-effort packet-routing protocol; the first router being further operable to switch the data of the data flow in accordance with a switched virtual circuit protocol, but only in response to the customer terminal initiating a switched virtual circuit for the data flow.